

TICKHILL
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

For the year ending December 31st, 1917.

T. A. CALEY, M.D., M.R.C.S., Eng.,

Medical Officer of Health.

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Year Ending December 31st, 1917.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS
OF THE COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting my report for the year 1917. Owing to the conditions of War, which unfortunately are still present, and the need for the continuance of the utmost economy in labour and material, many details are again omitted from this report, and I have only dealt with those facts which immediately affect the health and welfare of your district.

POPULATION.

I estimate the population of the district at 2,000, but for the purposes of this report I have used the estimates provided by the Registrar General, namely :—2078 for calculating the Birth Rate, and 1864 for calculating the Death Rate. The population at the time of the last Census was 1806.

I have been unable to gather any evidence to show that the health of the people has been in any way affected by the comparative shortage of food which has been prevalent during part of the period under review.

SANITATION.

Our efforts in this direction have been much curtailed owing to war conditions, but all the necessary precautions have been taken to prevent the spread of disease. There are several matters that call for early attention, particularly with regard to the drainage and water supply of the district. The present drainage system is very faulty and there is need of considerable extension of the sewers, not only to provide for the existing population, but for the probable increase which will take place when trade becomes normal again. Each year that passes emphasises the need of a "laid on" supply of good water, and I have no doubt you will see your way to provide for this at no very distant date.

The scavenging of the district was done in a very indifferent manner throughout the greater part of the year, causing many complaints from the inhabitants. This state of things is inevitable when we have to depend upon the services of a contractor over whose work we have comparatively little control. At the same time I think the people might do much more to help us in the matter, and to make the work less arduous and disagreeable. The ashpits are intended for fine refuse only; the larger rubbish should be burnt or collected by the monthly bell cart, and all slops should be poured down the drain. If this is not adhered to I shall have to ask you to take such steps as will impress individuals with a sense of their duty as townsmen and neighbours.

The cost of scavenging has again been somewhat heavy owing to the price of labour, etc., but I feel sure that the results have been such as to fully justify the outlay. Cleanliness in and around our homes is of first importance in the prevention of disease. Especially is this the case with cottage homes whose conveniences are necessarily cramped, and where little children are constantly playing round yards hemmed in by ash-pits and privies.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

In the first month of the year we had a small epidemic of Chicken Pox, which was followed, in February, by a much more extensive epidemic of German Measles. There were 67 cases of this latter disease and it did not disappear until early in July. Four of the earlier cases were so severe as to give rise to grave doubts of their being Scarlet Fever, and I had them removed to the Isolation Hospital for observation. They were retained for a few days until we were sure of a diagnosis.

In the last quarter of the year there were two cases of ordinary measles.

I am pleased to state that only one case of Scarlet Fever was reported, which was imported from Rotherham. This case was nursed at home as the means of isolation were quite satisfactory.

Whooping cough made its unwelcome appearance in October and there were many cases, mostly amongst the younger children, necessitating the closure of the Infant School. I am pleased to say there were no deaths caused by the disease.

There were two cases of Tuberculosis reported, one of which was very acute and died,

All premises where infectious diseases occurred were thoroughly disinfected at the completion of the case.

In connection with the subject of infectious diseases, and particularly measles, I am pleased to tell you that the County Medical Officer is prepared to place a nurse at our disposal should we require help in dealing with an epidemic. Needless to say I shall be most happy to take advantage of the offer should the necessity occur.

It has been my unpleasant duty to report the mother of a family to the Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Children because of the verminous condition of her children and house. I am pleased to state that his interference had beneficial results.

SCHOOLS.

These have been visited from time to time, and their condition found satisfactory. The Infant Department was closed from March 9th to 26th for German Measles, and from November 2nd to December 3rd for Whooping Cough.

The health of the children attending the Mixed Department was good throughout the year.

The efforts of Nurse Kellett, the School Nurse, towards improving the condition of the children, attending school and prior to doing so, have been followed by excellent results, which I have greatly appreciated. Her motherly interest in the infants and young children has been a marked feature of her work.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

The question of a Housing and Town Planning Scheme was debated by the Council on February 18th, and the principle of a scheme accepted. The matter has since been held over in order to collect necessary data for the definite adoption of such a scheme.

During the year the County Sanitary Inspector has made a detailed inspection of your district, and his report has been placed before you. His conclusions are not complimentary to the present condition of much of the cottage property. His report confirms many matters which have been brought to your notice on previous occasions.

A closing order, followed by an ejectment order, was made respecting two cottages in Westgate. As these have not yet been put into repair the closing order is still in force. A further closing order was made respecting four other cottages in Westgate. This order was not enforced as some attempt was made to put the places into decent repair. They are still in a very unsatisfactory condition.

After the war there will be a great demand for more and better class cottage property than your district can at present provide. I suggest that you take steps to be well prepared for that time by pushing forward the Housing Scheme previously referred to.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS.

There were 30 births registered during the year which gives a birth rate of 14.45 per 1000 living persons. There were 17 males and 13 females. Of these 30 births five were illegitimate, and six of the infants died in the first year of life. Only one of the illegitimate infants died.

The number of births is considerably below the average for the last six years, which is 53.

The natural increase in the population, namely, excess of of births over deaths, has entirely disappeared, there being exactly the same number of births as deaths. The average increase for the last six years was 26.

The ratio between males and females born is about the average for the period named, namely, an excess of two males.

DEATHS.

Twenty-six deaths were registered in the district and four residents died out of the district, making a total of 30 deaths.

Of these 14 were males and 16 females.

The death rate per 1000 living persons was 16·09.

Eleven deaths were in persons over 70 years of age. Six infants died under the age of one year.

The average at death was, males 45 years, females 49 years.

The average number of deaths for the last six years was 28.

The infantile death rate reached the high figure of 200 per 1000 infants born.

The causes of deaths amongst adults were ;—

Diseases of the lungs 9, of the heart 4, of the abdomen 4, rheumatic fever 1, brain lesions 3, cancer 1 and old age 2.

Amongst the infants :—

Tuberculosis of the lungs caused one death, gastritis and diarrhoea 2, premature birth one, debility at birth 2.

SUMMARY.

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| Area of District | ... | ... | ... | 5579 acres |
| Estimated Population | ... | ... | ... | 2000 |
| Inhabited Houses... | ... | ... | ... | 504 |
| Birth Rate per 1000 living persons | ... | | | 14·45 |
| Death | „ | „ | .. | 16·09 |
| Infantile Death Rate per 1000 births | ... | | | 200 |
| Natural increase of population | ... | ... | | Nil |
| District Rate was... | ... | ... | ... | 2s. 6d. |
| The Poor Rate was | ... | ... | ... | 4s. 0d. |

I have the honour, Gentlemen, to remain,

Your obedient Servant,

T. A. CALEY,

M.D., M.R.C.S., ENG.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Presented 2nd July, 1918.